

WESTERN PEOPLE

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THE PRODUCTIVE GOAT

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LOST THINGS

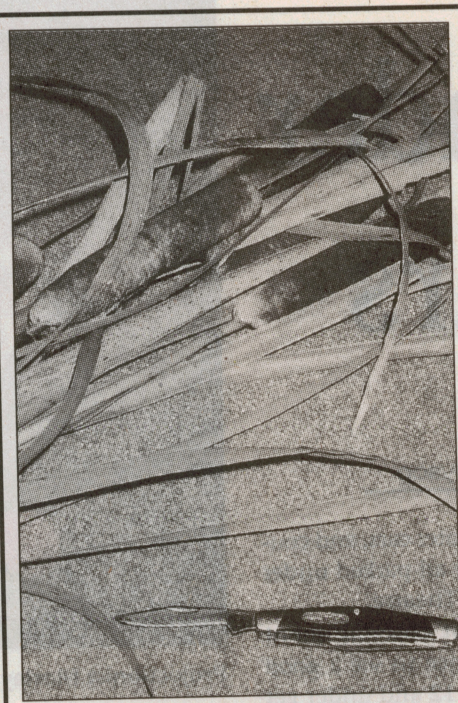
Memory by Ernie Kaesmodel

In my life, and I suppose in the lives of others, certain things have slipped away. It is not that they were not valued. It is just that sometimes I didn't see what was going to happen or know what I would value later in life.

One of the first was a pocketknife that my father gave to me. He used to work away from the farm during the week. Then, as now, farms sometimes demanded more than they gave. He would return on Friday evening and while it wasn't his habit to bring me gifts, on occasion there were special things. I can still remember the look and feel of that knife. It was black, nicely rounded and of a good size. Perfect for making arrows out of cattails, and just the thing to delight a six-year-old farm boy.

But it slipped away. I didn't know that it would fall out of my pocket. And more than that, I did not know that 45 years later I would still remember it and feel a sense of loss.

Then there was the brass pocket sundial that my grandmother gave me. It had a compass built into the case and inside the lid tables and ellipses were engraved so that it could be used anywhere in the world, in any season. It was exactly what every young adventurer should have. My grandmother was



Sheila Robertson

gone before I was old enough to appreciate her and the sundial, too, got lost in the busyness of life. It slipped away so quietly that it was years before I noticed.

At one time, the attention of my boyish mind was caught by the idea of learning Morse code and a family friend built me a practice board. The workings of the circuit that produced the audible sounds were beyond my understanding, but the key was a thing of beauty. How he happened to have such a thing or why he was willing to give it to me were questions that didn't occur to my immature mind. There was just the pleasure of using it. The magnetic pulses generated by that key may still be travelling outward into the universe, but the key's whereabouts are long lost to me.

One hot August night, when I was 15, I paddled my first canoe through the reflection of a harvest moon as the loons called from bay to bay. That canoe slipped through the water as if it were itself little more than a memory. But I do remember the night, the moon, the canoe, and the young woman who had agreed to accompany me. Both were valued and both have drifted out of sight. More than 20 years ago, an old friend told me he thought he knew what had become of the girl, and he said that he would tell her about me if he ever met her. As to the fate of the canoe and even how it slipped away, I have no idea.

It is a gift to have had such things and people in my life. All were important to me in their time, but I was young. I didn't know that if I wasn't careful they would slip away. I didn't know that you could lose people just as easily as a pocketknife. One day they are near and touchable, and the next they are gone without a trace, leaving only the memories.

It takes time to learn such a lesson, and few things instruct us more clearly than the loss of that which we value. Now, with a maturing appreciation of what I have in my life, I take much better care of both pocketknives and people.

(Ernie Kaesmodel writes from Prince George, B.C.)

Stars under the stars

Story & photos by Debbie Hysop

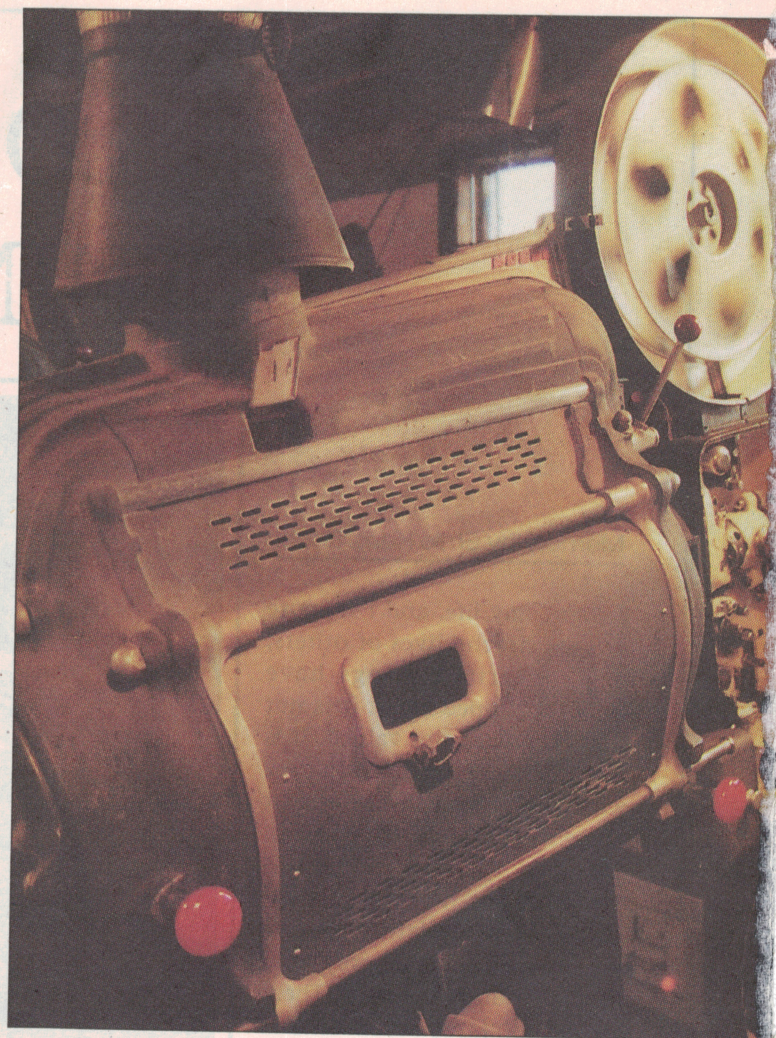
Kids in pyjamas, teens packed into beater cars, and couples looking for an evening out are all parked under the stars at the Shamrock Drive-In Theatre.

On summer evenings, it's the best entertainment option for a lot of people. It offers a chance to see a good show on the big screen for \$5 — and kids 12 and under get in free.

The Shamrock, on the outskirts of Killarney, Man., is one of the few remaining drive-ins on the Prairies. At one time, drive-ins were fixtures, dotting fields near every decent-sized town. However, Shamrock owner Dorothy Gibson believes there are now fewer than 10 of them left in Manitoba. The convenience of watching videotapes at home has dealt many theatres, both drive-in and indoor, a fatal blow, but Gibson says now she's seeing many of her former patrons coming back.

She's not surprised. She says watching a movie in a rum-pus room can't hold a candle to the drive-in experience. Waiting for the sun to set, sending the kids to the old merry-go-round and slide, setting out the blankets and lawn chairs on the grass, watching the previews, the big screen, and theatre popcorn are all a part of the drive-in mystique. And Gibson says she knows a lot of her customers don't go to the drive-in to see the show: for everyone from the teenagers hanging out in the concession to the mothers in lawn chairs watching their children at the playground, it's really more of a social event.

The Shamrock was built in the early 1950s. Gibson and her former husband, David, bought it in 1959. Their children grew up working there, and now the grandkids help out, alongside some of the dozens of students who have found their first job there, making popcorn and pouring soft



Projectionist Morley Myers readying film on the old projectors.

drinks. Speaker posts line the rows; Gibson has not made the switch to a system that lets patrons listen to their movies over car radios, and she doesn't intend to. The two original 35-millimetre machines still project the movies, although they break down now and then.

That's the signal for the viewers to lean on their horns, which Gibson says seldom fails to frazzle projectionist Morley Myers. But she understands. "That's part of the thing you do at the drive-in," she says with a smile.

Myers has spent long evenings at the drive-in for the past 21 years. In the summer, it's not dark enough to start the movie until 10 p.m., and by the time he has finished running the movie and cleaned up the grounds, it might be 2 a.m.

Almost every night, Gibson sits in the ticket booth while the cars file in and, quite often, she catches kids trying to sneak in. "Trying to sneak into the show has become almost a rite of passage, I'm afraid," she says, laughing again. "They've always done it. It seems to be something a lot of kids

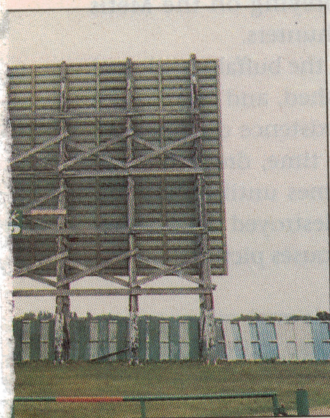




think they just have to try."

She's seen every trick in the book, from people hiding in trunks and under blankets in the back seat to kids on bicycles creeping in from the adjoining pasture to nestle up to a speaker in the back row. The standard punishment for kids who get caught is cleaning up all the trash on the grounds after the movie is over.

Because she doesn't charge for children under 12, except for special kids' movies, Gibson says it's amazing how many people seem to stay stuck at age 12. She has a keen memory, however, and doesn't hesitate to remind youngsters that if you're 12 one year, you're 13 the next.



There is one positive trend she has noticed among her patrons. "We don't have the drinking we used to have," she notes. "Morley used to pick up seven or 10 cases of empty beer bottles after a busy night. Now we'd be surprised to get a case."

As for the drive-in's reputation as a passion pit for teenagers, that also has changed. Gibson has noticed

that, in recent years, young people tend to arrive in groups rather than pairs.

The theatre opens in May, running movies just on the weekends until the end of June. In July and August, there's a show every night, with triple bills scheduled for long weekends. The drive-in continues into October. Gibson tries to choose the shows that will appeal to her audience, but sometimes it's a gamble. Viewing preferences seem to be changing, she says.

"It used to be I'd pack the place with a John Wayne movie. A few years ago, I figured Clint Eastwood's new movie would be pretty popular, but it wasn't."

She can name some decided hits that haven't drawn the cars, either. For example, the mega-hit *Titanic* didn't draw people like she expected, but *The Horse Whisperer* did.

"I was surprised at that," Gibson says. "Maybe it's a rural thing, or maybe everyone had seen *Titanic* before we opened." Children's movies, comedies and recent Academy Award winners still pack them in. And the triple bills always prove to be a major event, both for the movie and for visiting with friends.

Gibson's son, Rocky, who also grew up working at the drive-in, says he's noticed that, these days, there are fewer ups and downs in attendance according to the movie.

"It's more a steady thing . . . whether it's a good show or not. I think a lot of it is, it's something to do."

Dorothy Gibson knows the drive-in is an important part of summers in Killarney. When a tornado blew the screen down a few years ago, some people in the community were concerned that she wouldn't rebuild. But she did.

Bianca MacCauley's husband, Jim, grew up in Killarney and spent many a night under the stars at the drive-in. Although the family now lives in Calgary, the two MacCauley children count on going to the Shamrock as part of their summer holiday in Killarney.

"It's fun, and it's kind of nostalgic," she says. "There are no drive-ins in Calgary; the first time we came, the kids didn't know what it was. Now we're out here for lots of shows during the summer."

Gibson seems to enjoy the theatre as much as her patrons. "Even after all these years, I look forward to going to work in the evening," she says.

A few years ago, she reluctantly increased the admission price by 50 cents after six years of holding the line. "It's a fun, affordable family thing to do," she says. "It's also something for the young people to do. I want to keep it that way." ■

There's not much left of Tail Creek settlement, near Content Bridge in central Alberta. There's a simple iron sign, a few grave markers and a cairn stating, "Dedicated to the Métis People Who Were Among the First Permanent Residents of This Area." It lists 17 names. These are the only remnants of what was once the most populated semi-permanent settlement on the Prairies.

In the 1850s, geologist John Macoun traveled through the Buffalo Lake district and mentioned the outstanding beauty of the lake and its surroundings. Tail Creek Settlement rose at the time Fort Edmonton was declining and before the establishment of Fort Calgary in 1875. That same year, Winnipeg had a population of 3,700.

Because of its shape, Buffalo Lake was named after the animal. Its tail was the link between Buffalo Lake and the Red Deer River and it was here that the Métis established what has been called "a giant abattoir," Tail Creek Settlement. In the mid-1870s it was estimated to be inhabited by almost 2,000 people on a seasonal basis. The entire prairie area had once been a teeming movement of buffalo but with the depletion of herds to the east, hunters and their families converged here, where the buffalo fed.

Some arrived on horseback, others on Red River carts. Some of the migrants had their winter "resorts" waiting for them while others had to build shelters before the bad weather arrived. Tail Creek consisted of some 400 log homes, chinked with clay. Buffalo hides covered the windows. Doors were wood slabs. Mud brick fireplaces provided heat and were used for cooking. Buffalo robes were used for bedding. In the early 1900s, large copper pots were found at the site. As is typical of migratory people, possessions were limited.

Métis and Indian hunting methods had been influenced by the Europeans. Because their lives depended on the success of the hunt, it was carefully organized. Scouts would go out and bring back word on the masses of buffalo and the hunters would plunge in on horseback, carrying rifles and powder containers often made from buffalo horns. In some

regions, hunters were punished for not co-operating in what resembled a military campaign. A hunter who killed 12 buffalo in one hunt was considered skilled.

Many famous names are linked with Tail Creek Settlement. Abraham Salois was credited with killing 600 buffalo in one year; 37 in one hunt. Gabriel Dumont is supposed to have participated in Tail Creek hunts. Another hunter, Baptiste Vaness, who died at the age of 87 in 1920, is buried with his wife in the Content Cemetery.

In an economy based on the bison, women's skills at using all of the animal for trade and family support was vital. Helped by the youngsters, women prepared hundreds of pounds of pemmican. During the harsh winter of 1875 - 76 laborers were dispatched from St. Anne mission to purchase pemmican. They brought back 2,100 pounds of it. The massive buffalo robes had to be prepared for trade. Women provided stability and strength to the community.

The hills around Tail Creek must have echoed with the thundering herds, the creaking of Red River carts and the shouts of the hunters and rifle fire. At times, there would be the sounds of violins as the Métis danced jigs and reels. In lives filled with danger, they made time for fun.

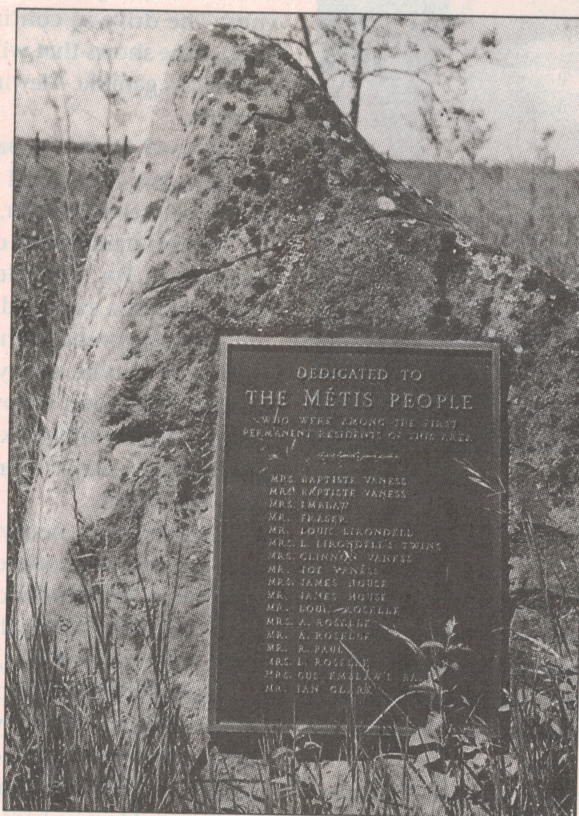
In his diary entry of Sept. 26, 1874, Sergeant-Major Samuel Steele noted, "One of the (Métis drivers) had a violin, and to its music the remainder in turn danced a Red River jig on a door which they carried in their carts for that purpose."

The following year, Steele established a North West Mounted Police post at Tail Creek, to discourage the whisky traders who were preying on the Métis and Indian hunters.

By 1880, the buffalo herds had all but vanished, and Tail Creek's reason for existence disappeared. At the same time, dreaded smallpox ravaged the homes until only a few remained. In the 1960s, fire also destroyed the wooden houses or "ghost" houses pictured on the

While there are few mementos of this once vibrant community, many of the descendants of these settlers continue to live in nearby farms, towns and cities. Theirs is a proud and distinctive inheritance.

Tail Creek settlement



It was once the most populated semi-permanent settlement on the Prairies

Duke, the deer dog

By Betty Ann Dick

Duke, our black lab, loves animals, but we didn't realize how much until he brought home a fawn in June, 1999. It was late in the day when I looked outside and saw the dog coming from the bush with something quite big in his mouth.

I imagined it must be the dead beaver we had seen earlier, close to the river. A while later, our oldest daughter, 14-year-old Tracy, noticed the beautiful baby deer, lying beside our big dog. Both looked completely relaxed. Somehow, Duke had brought the creature home without harming it, and now he seemed very proud and protective.

The little fawn was very weak and could hardly stand the first day. We figured it couldn't be more than a day old. We bought goat's milk for the fawn until it was a few months old, then put it on milk replacer.

Duke and the fawn often slept beside each other, and our four kittens would also snuggle right beside the little deer. The dog often licked the deer and sometimes the deer licked the dog, too.

The deer stayed close to our yard for almost a year. Although she ate grass and leaves, she also loved raw potato and dog food. It sounded very crunchy when the dog, deer and kittens were all eating dog food.



Top: Duke with his second fawn, in 2000. Below: Roseanne and cousin Jaimi with first fawn, 1999.

When the deer was almost a year old, she disappeared for a few days, along with Duke and our puppy. We didn't know where to look for them, until a friend called. She'd spotted the trio near her home, about 15 miles east of us. We went to pick up the dogs and the deer came home a day later.

One day in May, 2000, Duke surprised us by bringing home a second fawn. There it was, lying in the front yard, first thing in the morning. Once again, we obtained goat's milk and fed the little creature. This fawn seemed stronger and more independent than the first one.

By the time it was two weeks old, it started going into the woods after feeding. It came to the door when hungry and sometimes it pawed on the door for attention. When we opened it, the deer would come running inside. It would step on our feet and jump up a little. Two bottles of milk would be gone in no time. After it had eaten, I scratched its neck, ears and back and she would lick my hand. It was so loveable. I became very attached to this second deer and always fed it in the morning. Later in the day, one of our six children would feed it.

On July 9, we fed the fawn for the last time. We haven't seen her since. Although we've looked in the woods and called for her, she has not returned. We miss her, and the

yearling that had gone off a few days earlier.

Our family has become very attached to deer and we are wondering what will happen next year. Will Duke bring home another little fawn? We'd love it! ■

(Betty Ann Dick writes from La Crete, Alta.)



Bonnie Scarfe has a fondness for animals, especially goats.

Inset: John Scarfe checks a batch of feta blocks, steeping in brine.

Story & photos by Sheila Robertson

Say 'goat'

Smile, now—just say cheese! And yogurt and milk and ice cream. These are among the items Gar-Lyn Valley Dairy Inc., a goat dairy north of Saskatoon, is gearing up to produce.

Goat's milk is something of an exotic beverage in Canada, but Jim and Bonnie Scarfe, who own and operate the dairy with their son, John, want to change that. Bonnie notes that more than 70 percent of the world's population relies on goats for dairy products. While comparable to cow's milk in terms of protein, fat and calories, goat's milk has some special qualities. It's higher in vitamins A, C and riboflavin and is often tolerated by those who are allergic to cow's milk. Goat's milk is more easily digested by humans, since the butterfat globules in goat's milk are smaller and finer.

"It's the closest milk to breast milk, and all sorts of animals thrive on it: elk, deer, bison, dogs, cats, calves," Jim said. He's excited about recent research suggesting

that goat's milk can lower cholesterol and boost the immune system, protecting against strokes and heart disease. An Alberta research study concluded in 1997 that goat feed mixed with canola oil increased the levels of an anti-carcinogenic compound that occurs naturally in goat's milk.

Whey, a by-product of the dairy, is discarded or given to pig farmers now, but it may someday be dried and used as a protein additive to fruit drinks. "It's highly digestible and gets into the system quickly, so it's good for diabetics and for athletes like weightlifters," Jim said.

While the medicinal properties of goat's milk are promising, other devotees simply like the way it tastes. John Scarfe, 33, enjoys the culinary arts and has been experimenting with goat products. Recently, he made lasagne and cheesecake using Gar-Lyn's mild chevre. Like the dairy's other cheese products, the chevre is prepared with dehydrated rennets and other cultures obtained from New Zealand.

The Scarfes see their best opportunity in the feta market. "That's where we're putting the majority of our efforts," said Jim. He noted that feta is the third most popular cheese in Canada (cheddar is first, followed by mozzarella.) Each year, Canada imports 1.3 million kilograms of feta and the Scarfes would like a share of that. They believe their feta cheese will soar in popularity. It's already sought after by some local restaurants and is available, along with their goat's milk, yogurt and some plain and flavored soft cheeses, at health food and grocery stores.

Geared to Canadian palates, Gar-Lyn feta is creamier and not as sharp as European-made fetas. The subtleties of taste and texture are among many considerations as the Scarfes expand their dairy operation.

They have been processing milk for a little more than a year. Initially, when they were trying out the system, the milk was sold for livestock feed. Now they're beginning to get some recognition for their efforts, even though Bonnie the bookkeeper notes they're still in the red. Last year, the Western Canadian Food Processors Association named Gar-Lyn's goat milk eighth in its 10 best

new products in Western Canada.

"When we give out samples of goat milk at the Farmers' Market, people are always surprised that it tastes so good," Jim said. The strong flavor sometimes associated with goat milk is avoided by controlling the rations: farmers who supply the dairy must sign a feed contract.

"That's because, if given a choice, goats would eat weeds and all sorts of junk rather than grass or alfalfa," he said. "Of course that affects the milk." The goats milked for Gar-Lyn are penned and fed a consistent, high-quality diet.

Jim and Bonnie still have a number of goats on the property, including some kids born this year, but nothing like the 160 they once had. They got into goats 14 years ago, for breeding purposes, and collected a number of awards for their stock.

Bonnie, a passionate animal lover since her childhood in Saskatoon, was delighted to move her family

to the country in 1989, and to have the space to acquire cows, horses, dogs and cats. She developed a particular fondness for goats. "I like a goat's personality," she explained. "It's like a dog; friendly, curious, loyal, easy to handle. Compared to a goat, a cow is stand-offish."

When the couple began the dairy, however, they quickly learned it was impossible to tend and milk their own herd and run the plant. They sold most of their goats to a supplier.

Establishing and increasing the supply of milk has become a challenge. They can't get into making ice cream yet, for instance, because they don't have enough milk. They're looking for more farmers willing to milk at least 150 goats apiece.

"There's one contract for North America we'd really like to get," Jim said, naming a major big-box retail chain, "but we'd need 38,400 goats to supply that. We could sustain 80,000 goats in this province. There are no quotas as with cow's milk, so it could be very lucrative."

A drawback is the initial investment, he admitted. "A good milking goat costs \$250-\$500."

They're looking at the possibility of

corporate farms, set up as venture capital projects. "It could be similar to the hog barns, with 2,000 goats in one barn," Jim said.

Goats breed all year. After five months' gestation, does have two kids, often one male and one female. Kids not needed for the dairy could be culled to support meat and hide markets, Jim noted.

The Scarfes travelled to several dairies in the United States and Canada before starting their own plant in 1996 and naming it with a combination of their middle names: Jim's is Garrah and Bonnie's is Lynn. They credit Donat Kollar, a Swiss cheese master in Salmon Arm, B.C., for his encouragement and information. "He's been our mentor,"

"WE COULD SUSTAIN 80,000 GOATS IN THIS PROVINCE. THERE ARE NO QUOTAS AS WITH COW'S MILK, SO IT COULD BE VERY LUCRATIVE."

Bonnie said. "He really helped us get a feel for it."

They are also grateful to Quebec-based Saputo Foods Ltd. for distributing their products. "It's nice when a big guy is willing to help out a little guy," Jim said. "Most of our markets are now in Saskatchewan, but that will change."

Along with a hired, full-time microbiologist, the family has been running the dairy. Bonnie is the business manager. John processes milk, makes cheese, and does packaging and maintenance.

"The clean-up is 90 percent of the work," John explained. "We know that if bacteria gets into just one tiny piece of equipment, we'd have to throw out a whole batch of milk." He waved at the gleaming stainless steel equipment and the expanse of concrete rooms, separated by vertical plastic blinds. "Everything has to be kept spotless. We have a clean-in-place system using dairy-approved chemicals."

Jim handles marketing and works with the farmers. He recently completed a university course in dairy management. Other jobs include hauling water from the city (running the plant

requires a great deal of potable water), and bringing in milk from the suppliers.

"We're all working long hours, and it'll stay that way until we can get our raw milk volumes up and work into a break-even situation," Jim said.

Their new, metal-sided building totals 7,000 square feet, but they're using 4,200 square feet now, and processing just two or three days a week. Most of the equipment came from a failed cow dairy in Yellowknife. The milk press is capable of pasteurizing 1,300 litres of milk an hour and the packing machine can put out 2,400 litres an hour.

To replace the building and acquire the necessary equipment now would cost at least \$1 million, Jim estimated. They invested \$150,000 themselves and managed the rest with loans from Mid-Sask. Community Futures, Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan and the provincial government program Saskatchewan Opportunities.

"It's so much more economical to run an operation like this in Saskatchewan," Jim emphasized. "On the Prairies, we can produce high-quality products at low prices. In British Columbia, feed costs as much as \$12 a bale and the land is expensive. Here, a bale of hay costs \$2 to \$3 and the land costs are lower."

Still, Janet Panford, a Saskatoon-based industrial research consultant with the National Research Council, believes farmers need incentives to go into the dairy business. "It's not cheap to feed and house animals through the winter," she said.

Panford has served as a technical adviser to the Scarfes and said the council has assisted with some funding to get their plant operating. She was able to help them find a microbiologist, for instance, a key employee required by law to monitor inputs and outputs. Samples are tested for bacteria, coliforms, fat content, water content (to ensure the milk is not being diluted at some point) and antibiotics.

"It's important there are no traces of antibiotics, because some of the people who buy goat's milk have chronic allergies," Jim explained.

The processed food industry is a fast-growing sector in Saskatchewan, Panford said. "In 1998, it contributed \$2.1 billion to the provincial gross domestic product. Yet, as rosy as that looks, it represents only one percent of Canada's processed food industry."

This is a paradox, when Saskatchewan occupies 40 percent of the nation's arable land, she said. It emphasizes the need for more value-added enterprises like the Scarfes'.

"We've made our fair share of mistakes," Jim admitted with a grin, "and we hope to make more. That's how you learn." ■

Some Political Advice

when you're feeling blue
out at the old metaphorical dump
a mile out of town
listlessly shooting rats
with your .22
because —
there's not enough money
for education and health care
business and farmers
day cares and seniors
taxpayers and potholes
here's one to give you
pause —
at the next election run
Santa Claus —
there's the lad to settle these scores
make it come out right
fill up all our sox with bucks
and do it without breaking any
laws —
better move fast on this
winter's coming and last winter
we damn near
frawze!

— Alex MacDonald

Constable Country

The artist said, "This is Constable Country"
showing her pastel on watercolor paper.
I knew the pond, the grove,
the way the tall grasses bent in a strong wind,
before rain.
I knew first-hand the way the elms, in full summer,
shadowed the pond, muting the blue summer water
into indigo;
how the grasses at the edge grew higher, met
September,
in yellow ochre.
"A beautiful part of the world, isn't it?"
I nodded silently,
thinking of home.

— Carol L. MacKay

GEM OF THE MILKY WAY

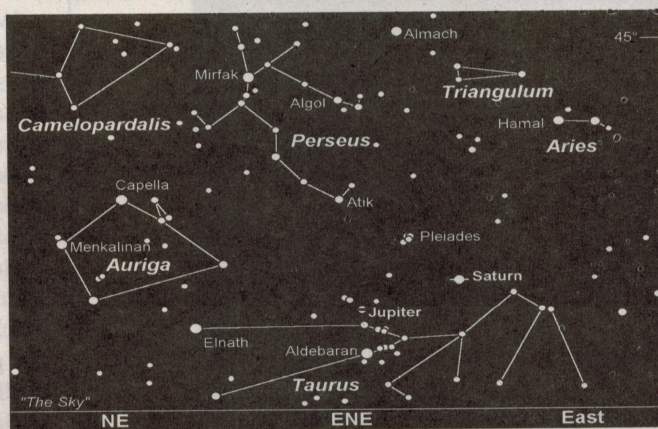
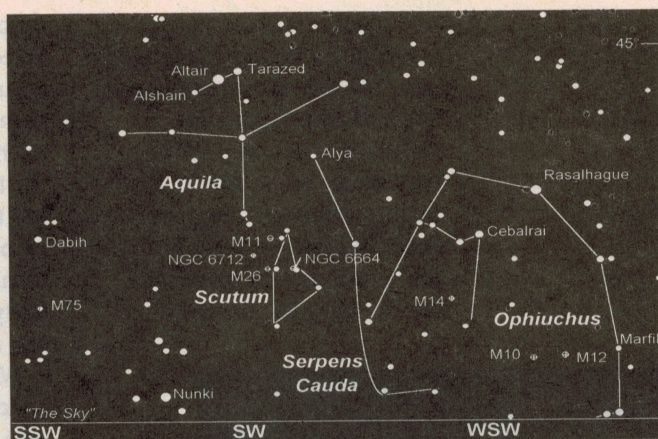
By Stan Shadick

In the past, some astronomers were forced to seek the favor of their masters in government in order to fund their research. When Galileo discovered the four largest moons of Jupiter, he called them the Medicean planets to gain the support of the powerful Medici family. When William Herschel discovered Uranus in 1781, he named it *Georgium sidus* (George's star) in tribute to King George III.

Modern astronomers try to stay out of politics. There has been a concerted attempt to remove any political affiliation from the cosmos. One politically-inspired constellation that remains in use today is Scutum.

In 1683, the army of King John Sobieski III of Poland repelled the Turkish invasion of Vienna. Seven years later, the celestial cartographer Johannes Hevelius commemorated his king by inserting a shield adorned by the royal coat-of-arms as the constellation Scutum Sobiescianum (Sobieski's shield) between Aquila and Serpens Cauda. The name is now simplified to Scutum.

The variable star delta (δ) Scuti is the prototype of a class of pulsating stars. This stellar giant oscillates in brightness every 4.65 hours. Now 187 light-years from Earth, it appears fairly dim but is approaching us at 162,000 kilometres per hour. In 1.25 million years it will pass within



Top: Scutum
above the
southwestern
horizon, two
hours after
sunset in
November.

Bottom: Jupiter
and Saturn
above the
eastern
horizon.

only nine light-years, making it the brightest star in the sky.

Although most of Scutum's stars are faint, the constellation as a whole is a glorious sight when viewed through good-quality binoculars. Due to its location in the central band of the Milky Way, it contains a rich concentration of stars in the form of the Scutum star cloud.

To the immediate left of the star alpha (α) Scuti, binoculars or a small telescope will reveal the brighter members of the NGC 6664 open star cluster, located 4,200 light-years from Earth. The 50 stellar residents of this cluster are 140 million years old.

M11 is found at the top end of Scutum near Aquila. Vice Admiral Smyth, a British ama-

teur astronomer, nicknamed it the Wild Duck Cluster because it resembled the V-shaped flight of wild ducks in migration. Large telescopes reveal more than 400 stars in this open cluster.

Globular clusters are immense swarms of stars that orbit around the Milky Way galaxy at vast distances from Earth. Some contain as many as a million stars. Over time, the heavier stars sink towards the core of globular clusters while the lighter stars appear to float as they follow orbital paths that carry them up to the outer regions of the cluster.

NGC 6712 is a globular cluster located 23,000 light-years from Earth in Scutum constellation. A census of its member stars revealed that high-mass stars outnumbered low-mass stars in its outer regions, unlike the case for typical globular clusters.

The explanation for this discrepancy may be that at one point in its orbit, the NGC 6712 globular cluster passes very close to the dense core of our Milky Way galaxy. At such times, the galactic centre produces such strong tides in the globular cluster that many of its lightweight stars are yanked away from the cluster. Only the heavyweight stars in the cluster survive this tidal stripping.

Astronomer E. E. Barnard described Scutum as "the gem of the Milky Way." Try your binoculars out on a clear evening and see if you agree. ■

QUILL MIGHTIER THAN PEN

Column No. 1592
by Doug Gilroy

The subject of today's picture is a porcupine, perched up in a tree.

He doesn't like the look of me below him, so he turns his back to me, humps up and exposes thousands of little



Doug Gilroy

spears (quills). Each quill is needle sharp and when penetrated into flesh the tiny little barbs, that ordinarily lie flat on the tip, flare out like fish hooks and therefore, are hard to pull out. The effort causes much pain to the poor victim.

The most dangerous part of a porcupine's body is his tail. If it is on the ground and a dog or coyote or whatever starts sniffing around it, the animal will get a slap in the face with that prickly tail, causing the quills to penetrate. When the porcupine slaps its tail, loose quills may fly out. Perhaps this is how the myth started that the porcupine could throw its quills.

In a recent letter Mitchell T. Wlock of Yorkton, Sask. reports seeing both a red-headed

woodpecker and a downy woodpecker family in his pasture. The downies were living in a tree and the chicks chirped steadily all day long. "No matter what time of day I went to observe them," he said, "the constant din of the chicks was always there until the day they left the nest. I

set out to capture the creature. "It took some time running around a back alley with a garbage bag trying to catch up to this muskrat. Finally, with the boys' help we got him. I ran to my car and set the garbage bag loosely in the trunk. I quickly made it to a fairly large slough outside the city and let the muskrat go."

With his flashlight, he watched the muskrat slipping into the water.

Wlock enjoyed watching a wide range of insects and animals this past summer, including a firefly, a mother skunk with eight babies, and a garter snake about to give birth. The snake nearly got squashed into a bale during haying season.

He also observed a family of grey partridges with a late batch of chicks. "They come to our garden where we have a birdbath on the ground."

Having not seen a bat in years, he was surprised when one flew right over his head on a recent night. Sometimes we may not be paying attention, but there's always lots going on in the world around us. ■■

Each porcupine quill has dozens of tiny barbs that make extraction more painful than entry.

guess they didn't want their parents to forget which tree they were in."

During the spring, Wlock had the opportunity to help a baby swallow that fell out of its nest. After a day of playing hide and seek in his shop, he was able to catch it and put it in another swallow's nest. "I didn't know if another pair would adopt a stray, but they did. However, this young one was a little older than the others and left the nest sooner than they did. The parents kept feeding it separately and their own, too, so it was quite a bit more work for them."

Wlock also came to the rescue of a muskrat this year, that was discovered by some teenagers in a garbage can. When the can was tipped, he



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The seasons

Kathy White, 13
Debden, Sask.

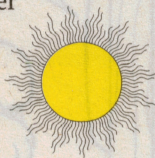
The icy, chilling wind
smothering and bitter
yet, sparkling crystals
hang from branches
and a soft, milky
white
blanket of snow
rests upon the still, cold ground.



Then as silent as the night
a growing warmth spreads
climbing the hills
and travelling the
plains
melting winter into
spring
buds appear and
flowers blossom



Gradually the heat rises
as the sun glides closer
the snow is all
melted
the water is cool
and supplies a
refreshing comfort
against the heat



Finally the heat slowly dies down
and the green gives way to browns
the world has sud-
denly become like
the sunset
the atmosphere
becomes colder
and a thin layer of white drifts in



Winter has come again

Ronald
Quaroni,
8,
Pleasant-
dale,
Sask. ▼

THE VISCOUNT ELEVATOR

Jazmin Evers, 8
Viscount, Sask.

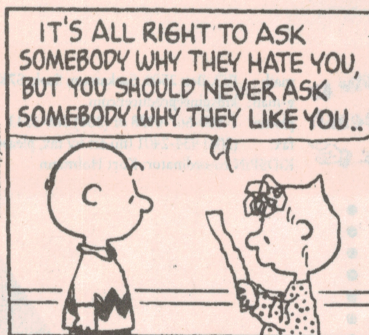
As I one day walked to dance,
I saw only one more chance.
To see the elevator stand so high,
almost reaching the sky.
Down it went before my eyes,
my thoughts were full of lots of whys.
Anger boiled inside of me,
and so I said just let me see.
The elevator gone forever,
and I'll see it again never.
I knew that it was not the only one coming down,
Viscount was not the only town.

don't play around farm machines

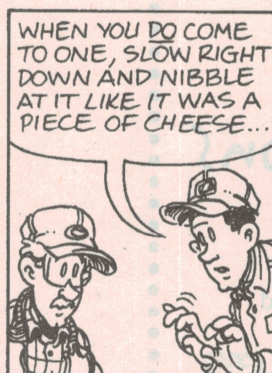


CORRECTION: Rob Wallace, a provincial fisheries biologist quoted in an article about Cumberland House schools ("Sturgeon in the schools," *Western People*, Aug. 31), points out that he has never advocated the creation of a sturgeon hatchery in Saskatchewan, although the article made that claim.

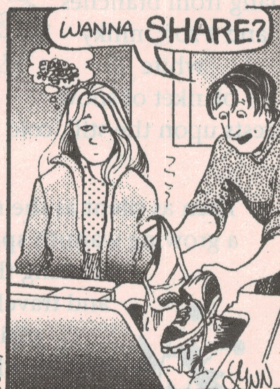
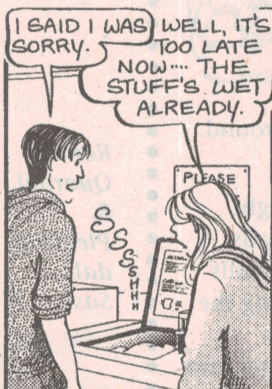
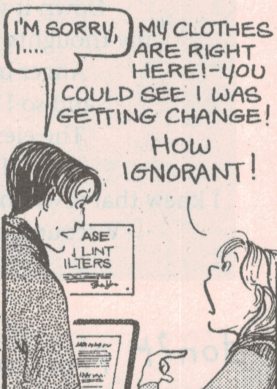
PEANUTS Classics



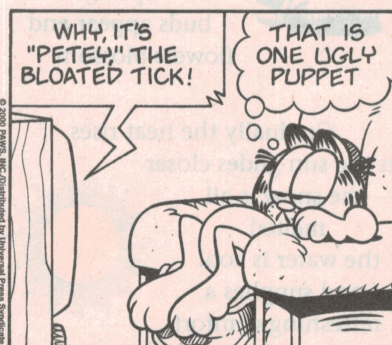
RURAL ROOTZ



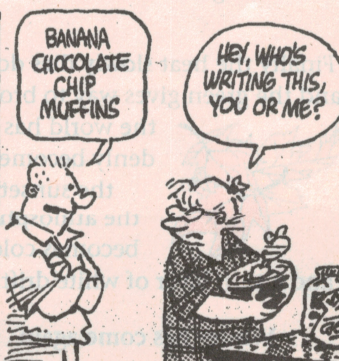
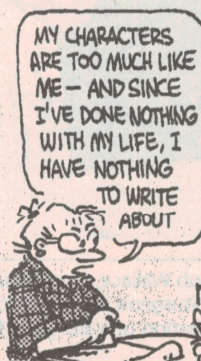
For BETTER or for WORSE



GARFIELD

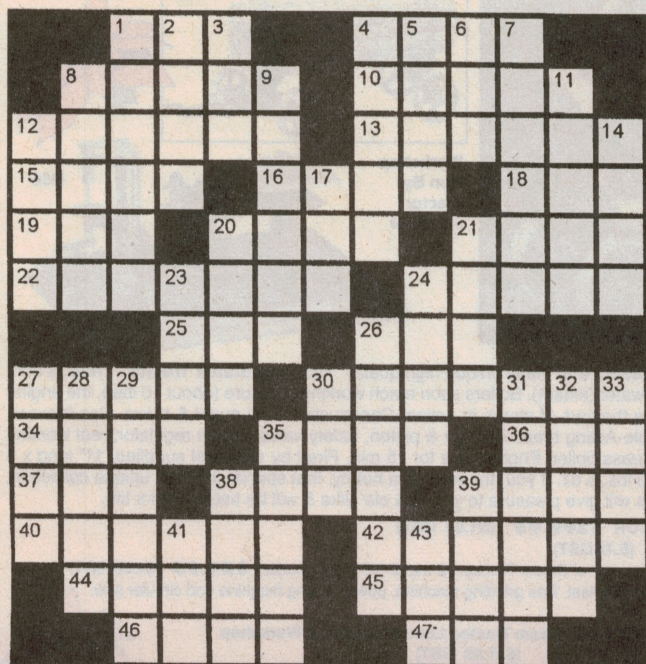


BETTY



Canadian Criss Cross

by Walter D. Feener



ACROSS

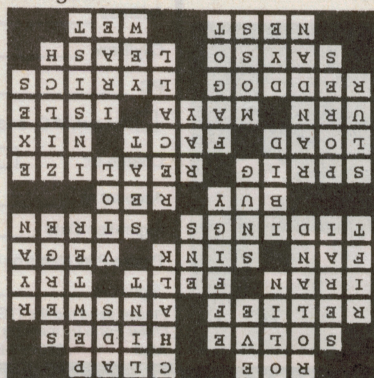
1. Milt
4. Thunder sound
8. Find the key to
10. Keeps secret
12. Charitable aid
13. Reply to
15. Persia
16. Hat material
18. Undertake
19. Dog days necessity
20. Go under
21. Lyra star
22. News
24. Warning sound
25. Make purchases
26. Classic car
27. Headless brad
30. Appreciate fully
34. Weigh down
35. Actuality
36. Disagree with
37. Vase
38. Siva's consort
39. Little island
40. Blitz, in football
42. Words of a song
44. Power to make decisions
45. Restrainer
46. Place one inside another
47. Rainy

DOWN

1. Charlemagne's nephew
2. Actress Lena
3. Mother of the human race
4. Limestone
5. Bits of fluff
6. Public notices
7. Tin and lead alloy
8. Turkish palace
9. Sculptured portrait
11. Rayon lining fabric
12. Burst open
14. Meg or Irene
17. Fourteenth letters
20. Fitting comfortably
21. Stringed

instrument

23. In the same place
24. Chair
26. Order to return
27. Pronounce indistinctly
28. Skin orifices
29. Three-oared boat
30. Beam of light
31. Be determined
32. Nothing
33. Ballot choices
35. Bundle of sticks
38. Bryophyte
39. Dies
41. Coloring matter
43. Bow wood



MAILBOX

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Bow Island History Book Committee will be publishing an updated history book and are currently requesting family histories, stories and pictures from former and present citizens of the Bow Island, Alta. area. Send information to: Bow Island History Book Committee, Box 608, Bow Island, Alta. T0K 0G0, e-mail: fdmellen@telusplanet.net.

Wanted: Hearing aids or molds. — R.E. Mc, Box 53, Comp. 38, R.R. 2 Copperside, Terrace, B.C. V8G 3Z9.

Wanted: McCall's patterns from Fall 91 or 92 called Rustic Impressions jumper, shirt, pants; overalls: #5537, 4056, 5312, 5617, 5560; jacket: #5598, size 8-12. Pay reasonable price. — Dana, Box 198, Alexis Creek, B.C. V0L 1A0.

Wanted: Pattern for church choir gown or a housecoat that has a full sleeve and body gathered onto a yoke. Will return pattern and your postage. — Shelly Pals, Box 743, Castor, Alta. T0C 0X0.

Researching McIvride family history. Would appreciate any information regarding the descendants of Peter and May McIvride, Rapid City, Man. Son Reg taught school somewhere in Saskatchewan starting about 1920. Son John may have lived in Sarnia, Ont. There was also a daughter Orme. Contact: Lois Bell, Box 517, Rocanville, Sask. S0A 3L0, 306-645-4224.

Wanted: Words to song "Why do you treat me as if I were only a friend? What have I done?" Mail to: Elinor Richmond, Box 244, Cypress River, Man. R0K 0P0.

Wanted: Highroads to Reading Grade I primer. — 571-104 St., North Battleford, Sask. S9A 1M5.

Wanted: Any skits, jokes, etc. to use for curling bonspiel. — Jean Fleming, Box 5, R.R. 1, Arborfield, Sask. S0E 0A0.

Wanted: Patterns or pictures for making willow baskets, etc. — Connie Turcotte, Box 291, Zenon Park, Sask. S0E 1W0.

NOCTURNAL ANIMALS

Word Find puzzle
by Janice M. Peterson

When all the words in the list have been found, the letters left over will spell the solution.

S T A B K L L E M S H T O M N
E S G R A S S L A N D S M I E
R E U G N R E T L E H S G E B
G N N L G L C R E E P H N A U
N S D E A O S I G H T O T P S
I I E T R R H I D E I E P R H
R T R A O I G G Y T A F A E B
A I G G O S S E A R O A D D A
E V R I R E S C E R T N A A B
H E O V A S O D E A D I R T I
E E U A T L F S G H R E K O E
T A N N O O T T N U H S N R S
U R D H X S T N E D O R E S L
C S C A Y E A Y E S R E S T W
A E S L I A R T T N E C S T O

Acute Hearing
Adapt
Aye-Ayes
Bat-eared Fox
Bats
Bushbabies
Creep
Darkness
Echolocation
Forests
Gardens
Grasslands

Hide
Hunt
Kangaroo Rat
Large Ears
Lorises
Moths
Navigate
Night Eyes
Owls
Predators
Rest
Rodents

Scent Trails
Sensitive Ears
Shelter
Sight
Smell
Underground

Solution
(14 letters):

Emerges
at night

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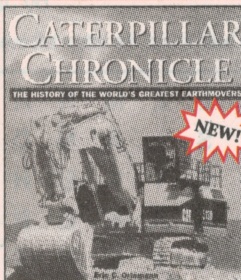


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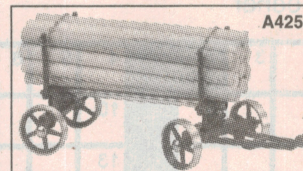
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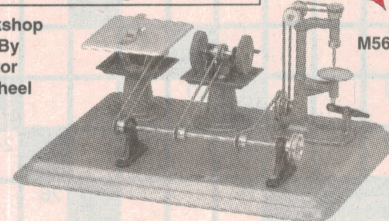
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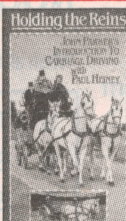
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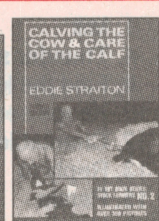
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